

Mount Diablo Trail Use Survey

Public Comments from 2008

USER GROUPS

- Add “trail runners” and “rock climbers” as distinct user groups
- Don’t make hikers and horses share trails/roads with mountain bikers
- Trails can accommodate horses, hikers, and bikers if common courtesy is sued
- Trails/building/maintenance volunteers have done a great job
- Provide bicycle trails for their use, only, and charge a user fee for this trail use
- Limit mountain bikes to fire roads; single track trails should be for equestrians, hikers, dog walkers
- California State Parks are generally very responsive
- Horseback riding is *recreation* and should be listed on primary use of Mt. Diablo trails
- My entire family has been enjoying the mountain for almost 100 years and it always seems to be getting better – the trails are fantastic, the staff wonderful, the maintenance a pleasant surprise
- There is room for all – if done with foresight (equestrians, hikers, bikers can share)
- Coordination on Shell Ridge with East Bay Parks and Walnut Creek is important

ROAD & TRAIL MAINTENANCE

- Remove the equipment from the hotel site on the Sunset trail
- Trails are well maintained
- Examine trails after heavy rains to get better information of trail conditions
- If some of lesser used trails are cleaned up, it would take pressure off the most popular trails
- Falls Trail needs steps in some areas, and considerable improvement
- Work is needed on State Road through Pine Canyon (hiking in particular) – creek takes over trail during the wet season
- Because of erosion at Pine Canyon, trail is unusable in winter/rainy months
- Occasionally, downed trees across trails for weeks with no way around because of drop off and walls
- Low maintenance of trails makes many sections narrower than planned, which creates erosion and safety issues
- Increase the trail maintenance staff
- Trails leading into the mountain from the Clayton side (parallel to Mitchell Canyon) are overgrown and need trimming
- Roads and trails are excellent, but some spots (e.g., Little Yosemite Trail) are dangerous due to natural erosion
- Eagle Peak, Bald Ridge, East, and North Peak trail (single track from North Peak to Mt. Olympia) needs to be rehabilitated, in parts
- Most of the service roads are unpleasantly steep, scrabbled with loose rock that makes traction by foot or bike unwieldy

ROAD & TRAIL DESIGN

- Provide more loop trails/alternatives
- More trail connections are needed (Summit Trail, Middle Trail or Back Creek)
- Love interconnected trails (i.e., Mt. Diablo to Morgan Territory to Round Valley)
- More single track for mountain bikes, including bottom to summit, and south side to the north side, and a variety of grades
- Need more horse friendly trails
- More single track trails that meander (as opposed to steep climbs) to improve hiking enjoyment and trail sustainability
- Need a trail design that is more conducive to cycling
- More narrow trails instead of fire roads
- Compute a safe combination of pitch and sightlines for a proper distance for bicyclist and equestrian to see each other (greater the pitch, the greater visibility is needed) – if this trail criteria can't be met, no bicycles on this particular trail
- Possibly need “one-way” trail, “downhill only” trail, “user specific” trail, or have specific hours or days on trails (e.g., every other weekend)
- Trails should wide enough for all users
- Network of trails is superb
- Please continue to put in re-routes where trails are too steep or dangerous
- Mt. Diablo State Park is 76 years old and we need to accept that it is impossible to make all trails conform to modern trail building specifications
- North & South roads need to be reopened , just like the Summit Road
- Need additional drinking water stations and restrooms
- Need restrooms/outhouse (anything that women can use) at staging areas, and on/off trails
- Need staging areas at beginning of Summit Trail and South Gate Entrance
- Mountain bikes are not a compatible multi-use situation; mountain bikes need trails designed and set aside for their use (these trails can tie into fire roads and exiting trails)
- Great having the trail that takes off at the North Gate to the right
- Have a trail easement between White Canyon/Red Rock Road/Peacock Spring area – park boundary to Juniper/Deer Flat (just a trail corridor)
- Fire roads need to be designed and improved for good drainage to minimize erosion
- Need “speed bump” logs, etc. to slow down mountain bikes
- Consider Olafson Ridge Road to Burma Road trail link accessed above Moses Rock at about 2200 feet (the switchback with the Bay tree colony)
- I like the inclusion of mileage on the sign posts
- Reclaim underutilized fire roads into single track trails
- Mitchell Canyon side offers brutally steep climbs, providing narrower trail with more switchbacks and in the shade. Leave difficult sections in place (e.g., roots, rocks, etc.)
- At least allow uphill on all trails for mountain bikers
- Do not confuse environmental requirements (for new or trail modifications) with simple use modification (allowing bikes on existing roads)

- Consider Skyline Park in Napa for how multi-use trails work. It's an equestrian run park full of single track. Other successful state parks to consider as a successful model for trail usage: Annabel and China Camp
- Need a water fountain on North Gate Road around Burma Trail/North Gate Crossing (3 miles from North Gate entrance)
- Decrease number of road crossings

SAFETY AND PATROL

- Increase park ranger staff and patrols
- MDSP has a horse, but no ranger to ride the trails and monitor them
- Safety for riders and others needs to be maintained, especially if considering multi-use trails
- Eagle Peak Trail, like Falls Trail is dangerous (loose shale)
- Safety should be the prime consideration in evaluating trail use
- Mountain bikers go down single track trails at high speed and recklessly (also with headphones on) and have no time to stop to avoid hitting someone, which creates a dangerous mix
- Trails are not a motocross – racing bikes at 30 mph will cause life threatening accidents
- Bikes should stay on fire roads where there is room to safely pass; users that go the same speed should share the same tracks
- Converting trails to multi-use would create an unsafe environment for horses mixing with mountain bikes, and the liability to the State would be huge
- Hetherington, Back Creek, Meridian Point, Tick Wood trails have steep drop offs and limited sight lines, making it difficult for equestrians to see illegal bicycle riders, and no room to turn around. Will stop riding my horse if bicycles are allowed on single tracks.
- North Peak Trail between Devil's Elbow and Mt. Olympia Trail are overdue for a major accident (poor line of sight, obstacles, and erosion) – lots of illegal mountain biking on narrow trails like Back Canyon, Mitchell Rock, Meridian Ridge Connector, and Eagle Peak
- Maybe technology (e.g., GPS) could help track users and help with enforcement of illegal usage of trails
- Need hand-operated bells on bikes to alert other users of biker's presence. All bikes in Germany, Austria and Switzerland need a bell and a light.
- Because of safety concerns for bicyclists, I do not ride my horse after dark in Mitchell Canyon
- Use same safety guidelines for horses and bike riders as sailboats having precedent over power boats, and pedestrians having right-of-way over cars – horses should have right-of-way over bicycles
- Educate bicyclists, hikers, and riders about safety issues (e.g., high speed)
- Need more enforcement presence – need a mounted ranger at Mitchell Canyon
- North Gate Road access is still dangerous to equestrians next to paved road with cars and trucks
- My concern is the access to water for people and horses – so, I tend to stick to short trails or creek-side trails in Shell Ridge open space

- Allow bicyclists to get off the road with cars and improve our safety – we go slower on narrow trails with technical features (making it safer)

INTERPRETATION & SIGNAGE

- More opportunity for guidance on trails for youth, disabled, etc.
- Signage is confusing – large lettering for trail you are on; small lettering for others
- Need signage with sign post numbers and matching maps
- Need clear direction that Summit cannot be reached from Mitchell Canyon Staging Area, but from North or South Gate Road
- Marsh Creek Trailhead and Morgan Territory Road needs better signage and trail markers
- More historical signs
- Would like a detailed map that includes single track names, and marked on trail
- Post “no bikes” sign on main fire road/trail, not further down on single track
- Hang gliders attract visitors – great marketing/revenue generating sport that has low impact, environmentally (need trail that offers viewing area for hang gliders)
- Put “Share the Road” signs on the paved roads

ACCESS & ACCESSIBILITY

- Riding horses is only way some people can access the trails
- There are not too many places horses can access the Mt. Diablo trails
- Please keep Mt. Tamalpais gate open
- Please don't limit our [hang gliding] access to existing Juniper launches with the updated plan – our focus is on launch and landing areas with rideshare on paved roads
- The SE launch is the only hang gliding launch area in the Bay Area that faces that particular direction
- Nice to have Dan Cook single track trail open for mountain bikes
- **How about “day-of-the-week” use designations**
- Multi-use is essential in this day and age to get all possible people of all ages out with nature
- Find out what state of Nevada did to let bikes access the Tahoe Rim Trail. The bikers are particularly courteous.
- Too many cars – limit vehicle access in the morning
- Trails have been fairly well-kept and easy to access, as well as horse-friendly and fun. I hope it stays that way
- More mountain bike access
- Access of mountain bikes to North Trail between Prospectors Gap and Devil's Elbow should be re-evaluated
- Get the connector between Diablo Ranch and Buckeye reopened (closed since Dec. '07)
- Re-open Southeast (SE) Launch for hang-gliding/paragliders (overgrown and unusable) – Could be maintained by Rogallo Hang-Gliding Club
- The 100-150 foot trail for hang-gliders allowed for one-third of all flights
- Hang gliders require small amount of trimming bushes (not a trail; no longer than 15 feet for take-off) – we like a grassy area

PARKING

- Have not been able to access the trails at end of Fenley Rd (off Tassajara Rd.) for years because of no parking, and the same for the Dan Cook Trail for equestrians because of no parking (for equestrian trailers)
- Need lower area parking

RULES & REGULATIONS

- I chose other parks that allow dogs on trails
- Enforce single track rules for mountain bikes
- Enforce dogs off-leash rules
- How can you promise reasonable enforcement with vulnerability of state finances?
- “No bikes allowed” and “No dogs off leash” signs are posted but not enforced
- Post speed limits for road bikes and ticket speeders or anyone abusing privileges
- Wish dogs were allowed (on leash) when I hike
- Institute same rules as East Bay Regional Park to not allow bicyclists on single track trails

WILDLIFE CONCERNS

- Eliminate informal trail through Knobcone Pt. rocks/cliff due to impacts to wildlife
- Ground squirrels are creating many holes in trails (also many in the banks of Mitchell Creek, especially between our private property gate and the Mitchell Canyon Parking Lot)